The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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The Young Builders.

"WHAT are you building, my children?
"A house upon the sand."
"But do you not know, my darlings,
A house like that won't stand?"

"This will; you'll see," said the madcaps,
"We've built it good and strong,
We dug down deep for its cellar,
It'll last forever so long."

"Then finish it up, my children,
But watch the rising tide;
They tell me sometimes, my darlings,
The ocean waves roll wide."

"They'll never reach here, dear auntie,
The sand is dry and white;
We'll build a beautiful castle,
We'll work as long as it's light."

So they worked away, the madcaps,
Busy as little bees,
Without one thought of the crested waves,
That go up and down the seas.

But by and by the white billows
Came rolling up the beach,
So slow at first you would scarcely think,
They ever the house could reach.

I sat and watched the young builders,
Waiting to see the fun,
I knew it would not be very long,
Ere the waves would make them run.

Faster and faster the billows
Came rushing up the shore,
Till by and by a fleck of foam
Lay on the castle's door.

Then the children looked in wonder!
Gone was the white, dry sand;
And faster and faster the billows
Came rushing toward the land.

How the little feet did scamper
Up to the gray, dry stones!
"Be careful," I cried, "my darlings,
You'll surely break some bones."

But like wild goats they clambered,
And soon were safe and sound,
Shouting to me in merry tones,
"It's lucky we were not drown'd."

But the house that they had builded,
Upon the white, dry sand —
The work of their fairy fingers—
Will the wild waves let it stand?

Faster and faster the billows
Came rushing up the shore;
They beat 'gainst the castle's windows,
They rushed within the door.

And by and by they came stronger,
And the "house beside the sea,"
Was carried away by the water
Too far for us to see.

Did my little darlings cry then?
I saw not a single tear,
Instead, they laughed and shouted,
"Next time, we'll build up here!"

The Nursery Elf.

DEAR little feet, how you wander and wander,
Little twin truants, so fleet!
Dear little head, how you ponder and ponder
Over the things that you meet!

Dear little tongue, how you chatter and chatter
Over your innocent joys!
Oh! but the house is alive with your clatter,
Shaking, indeed, with your noise.

Can't you be quiet a moment, sweet rover?
Is there no end to your fun?
Soon the "old sand-man" will sprinkle you over,
Then the day's frolic is done.

Come to my arms, for the daylight is dying,
Closer the dark shadows creep;
Come like a bird that is weary of flying,
Come, let me sing you to sleep.

Josephine Pollard.

What the Barn Cat thought of the House Dog.

YES, it's very hot out here in the sun, and up in the loft there's not a breath of air; but that's of no consequence for me and my kittens. We may almost suffocate, yet nobody cares; but the moment the dog so much as scratches the tip of his nose, or cries for a drink of water, every one rushes to see what is the matter. He must be fed, too, from china plates, and the meat is cut up at the table, while I have to sneak round the kitchen and back door, and get what I can. And if I but look at him, there's such a hue and cry, as if I were going to eat him up. I've heard that 'a cat may look at a king,' but I suppose she mustn't look at a dog. Horrid, blood-thirsty creatures! There I was at the back door, with my sweet little four the other day, when out came Prince. Of course I knew he was looking to find out which was the fattest, so he could pounce on her first. Don't tell me! I know. My great uncle's grandmother was no fool; and, when I first went out into the world, she said, 'Keep away from dogs, my dear, they would as lief eat you as look at you.' So of course I knew; and of course I flew at him and scratched him just a little bit, when he cried and barked, till you'd think the house was coming down; and then everybody ran, and it was 'Oh! you poor little darling, was he hurt? Scat, scat, you horrid thing!'

My nerves won't stand such shocks long. My pretty Black-tip is just like me, and hers will be shattered before she's out of kittenhood.

Don't you suppose that I would like to lie on soft beds and chairs, as much as he does? Of course I would. Of course I don't like the middle of the road, or the stable, but I can't help myself, of course. I'd rather hunt rats in a cool store room, where there was a chance of getting a lick or two at the cream than among the straw in the loft, where you get your eyes full of dust from the grain.

It's not only for myself that I feel it. But my children can't be brought up genteelly. Look at the little dears! Ah, they don't know what is before them. To be only 'stable-cats' all their lives. To have house-dogs turn up their tails at them as if they were not worth noticing!

It is much more aristocratic for a cat to live on broken bits from her mistress' table than to be obliged to catch rats and mice for herself. But what can I do? Can I see my darlings suffer? No, never.

There is that sneaking Prince again. Only wait a minute, and I'll give it to him. But oh! what a beautiful mouse! so fat and sleek, just making for the grain. Here, Black-tip, Snowball, Whitey and Purry, here's a chance for you."

And away they all scampered, with tails up in the air, after the poor mouse, without a thought of dogs to worry them. By the time the first mouse was caught and eaten, they saw another, a little field mouse, running away toward the orchard, so off they went a second time, through long grass and sweet-scented clover fields, catching a grasshopper or two by the way, and coming back quite tired and ready to take a nice nap in the dark loft, among the perfumed hay. After all, they were very happy cats.

WHAT THE HOUSE DOG THOUGHT OF THE BARN CATS.

Meantime, Prince has been sitting by the front gate, and this is what he thought:

"Bow-wow-wow, those impudent stable-cats! What is my dear family thinking of to allow them to stay here? I believe the odious things would take the very bones out of my mouth, if I would let them. Why can't they stay in the stable, and behave themselves quietly, instead of intruding into my premises, the yard and garden? It's well they can't come up stairs.

Even my dear mistresses are hard on me when I bark at them, and it's 'No, no, Prince, naughty Prince,' when they are only *cats*, and *stable*-cats at that.

It's very hard on me, for when I come out to enjoy myself, I expect to have a nice, quiet, undisturbed time. I'm sure I work hard enough for it. I protect the house at night, and I am kept busy during the day running after all the tramps who pass, and the young men who stop, besides giving the ladies employment in petting me, and supplying my wants. There she is again, with back up in the air, all ready to spit and scratch if I go within a yard of her. It is really hard on a poor dog, and it is the only thing to find fault with in my home. Every one is very good and attentive (they are such a dear family all but the cats) and I do have a very happy life, —if only those cats would keep in their proper place. I'm sure the stable is very nice. I,—

well, I wouldn't like it myself; but it's comfortable and large, with plenty of straw and rats and mice. What can a cat want more? I think I will make a row about it, and see if something can't be done; for I generally get my own way if I try hard enough.

Oh! there is some one going for a walk; one of my sisters, I really believe. I must go too."

And off he scampered, forgetting cats and all other grievances in a good run.

Now, little friends, I know you don't like morals; neither did I, when I was a child, though of *conrse* I like them now; but here is a very little one, just two or three lines. It is this: People in this world are not, and never can be, just alike. There are the stable-cats and the house-dogs, and each can live a pleasant life in his own way. Both are of use. If the stable-cat can't protect the house from human robbers, she can keep another kind from the grain. House-dogs must never be overbearing and want all the good things themselves; and if stable-cats can't be house-dogs, let them not be discouraged; for indeed I don't think the world would get on as well without them.—*The Churchman.*

Constant Boys.

ALWAYS the most constant boy in the Sunday School class is the best boy. He is sure to be the most interested in the lesson; first because each lesson helps him understand the one which comes next, and instead of taking here and there a lesson, he has the grand truths of the Bible unfolding to him every week. The constant boy is sure to be the most loved and respected. The teacher can't help regarding him with peculiar love and care. He watches for that fact, it fills his thoughts through the week; it inspires his every prayer. Constancy implies the rarest virtue, God makes it a test of saving love. He that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Now my dear boys, one and all, try this rare way of living. Be true to your best interests. Stand out bravely, and whatever else may be true of you, however poor, however rich, however gifted, however lacking, this trait of constancy to duty through love to God and his service shall raise you above all earthly circumstances to the acceptance to and love of God.

WHAT we are afraid to do before men we should be afraid to think before God.

Country Children.

LITTLE fresh violets,
Born in the wild wood;
Sweetly illustrating
Innocent childhood;
Shy as the antelope,
Brown as a berry,—
Free as the mountain air,
Romping and merry.

Blue eyes and hazel eyes
Peep from the hedges,
Shaded by sun-bonnets,
Frayed at the edges!
Up in the apple trees,
Heedless of danger,—
Manhood in embryo
Stares at the stranger.

Out in the hilly patch
Seeking the berries,—
Under the orchard tree,
Feasting on cherries,—
Trampling the clover blossoms
Down 'mong the grasses,
No voice to hinder them,
Dear lads and lasses!

No grim propriety,
No introduction;
Free as the birdlings
From city restriction!
Coining the purest blood,
Strengthening each muscle,
Donning health's armor
'Gainst life's coming bustle.

Dear little innocents!
Born in the wild wood;
O that all little ones
Had such a childhood!
God's blue spread over them,
God's green beneath them,
No sweeter heritage
Could He bequeath them.

Tina's New Doll.

ALL the little women want to see its clothes;
All the little women utter little oh's!

Curley hair and flaxen—very little nose;
The prettiest of sacques on—ribbons, flowers, bows.

In the cradle rocking—bumping on the floor;
Lying in a shocking heap behind the door.

Bending o'er its lesson—tumbling down the stairs;
Having on its night dress—kneeling at its prayers.

Little nose gets battered—then a foot is gone—
Then an arm is shattered—Dollie all forlorn.

Soaking in the pitcher—drying on the mat—
Doleful looking creature—riding on the cat!

Under marching orders—trotting to the door—
Leaving trail of sawdust all along the floor.

All the little women utter little oh's!
Tina wants a new one—gets it, I suppose.

Little Corporal.

The Elder Sister.

YOU will find no character in the home circle more useful and beautiful than a devoted elder sister who stands side by side with the toiling mother, lightening all her cares and burdens. How beautifully the house machinery moves on with efficient help. Now she presides at the table in the mother's absence, always attired so neatly that it is with pleasure that the father introduces her to his guests as "our eldest

daughter." Now she takes the little troupe into the garden, and amuses them so mother may not be disturbed in her work or rest. Now she helps the boys over their hard lessons, or else reads father's paper aloud to rest his tired eyes. If mother can run away for a few day's recreation, she leaves home without anxiety, for Mary will guide the house wisely during her absence. But in the sick room her presence is an especial blessing. Her hand is next to mother's own in gentleness and skill. Her sweet music can charm away any pain, and brighten the weariest hour. There are elder sisters whose presence is not such a blessing in the house. Their own selfish ends and aims are the main pursuit of life, and anything that stands in the way of these is regarded with great impatience. Such daughters are no comfort to a mother's heart. What kind of an elder sister are you in the household?

—o-o-o—

For the Myrtle.

The Picnic.

TIMMY BLAKE and his sister Maggie lived in a miserable tenement house, up I don't know how many flights of stairs. They were very poor and it seemed as if they hadn't much to make their life happy. Their clothes were ragged, their feet were bare, I think their faces were not always clean and their hair was seldom brushed. I don't know as they always had enough to eat; I hope they did, but it is certain they hadn't the nice things, and the comforts that some children have. It isn't to be supposed for one thing that they had games and books and playthings to amuse them, but yet, children are not wholly dependent upon these for amusement, and poor children often manage to find pleasure in very little things. When the bright sun shone it was pleasanter down in the street on the doorstep than it was in their close room up stairs, so they used to come down and watch the passers by, and find something to entertain them in what might chance to come along. It wasn't so good as playing in the fields, going fishing, picking berries, or many other things which some children can do, but yet as they never had had the chance to do any of these things, they thought the doorstep, and the look at the passers-by, and the horses and carts, and what they might chance to pick up here in the sunshine was not to be despised. They might perhaps have sometimes made mud pies here on the doorstep, for I believe all children are very fond of this amusement, but if they did it must have been of the dirtiest mud, for the street was very filthy indeed.

But however this may be, this very morning of which I am to speak, they were sitting in the sunshine, and my children, the sunshine you know is just as good and pure and healthy and pleasant in the dirtiest street, as in the broadest field or park, for it is like God's love always,—the one good and pure thing. Well, this morning they were sitting in the sunshine, and I think that though they were very poor and dirty and ragged

they were not so very unhappy, when a lady with a little girl came along and spoke to them. Jimmy jumped up and turned round to look at the lady, but Maggie still sat on the ground.

"Do you live here?" said the lady.

"Yes marm, up stairs there," pointing the way up; "three flights, first door to the right, but there's nobody at home, mother's gone out washing."

"Do you go to school?"

Jim hesitated.

"Sometimes, but mostly always I stays at home."

"Have you a father?"

"No marm, I've a mother."

"What is your name?"

"James Brine, and this is my sister and her name is Margaret Brine. Get up Meg and speak to the lady."

But Meg did not get up.

"Now, James and Margaret, would you like to go to a picnic to-morrow?"

"And what is a picnic?" said Jimmy. "Tell me that and I'll tell you whether we want to go."

"I will tell you what this picnic is, James. Some kind people are going to give those children who must stay in the city all the season, and cannot run in the green fields and get the fresh air, a chance to have a very pleasant day. They are going to give them a sail down in the harbor in a nice steamboat, and then they are going to land at a place where they will have a chance to go into the woods and stay a long time, and roam about and do what they please. And they will give them a good dinner and then when they have stayed there as long as they wish, they will go on the boat again and have a nice sail home. Would you like to go?

"Wouldn't I?" said Jim, his eyes standing out with surprise. "And Meg, she can go to?"

"Certainly you can both go if your mother is willing."

"Oh, she'll be willing."

"It is expected you will be very good, James, and obey all the rules."

"Yes, marm," said Jimmy. "When shall we go?"

"To-morrow morning at nine o'clock. Come to L—— wharf, and you will find other children there who are going, and the people who are to take care of you. And be sure, children, that you have your faces washed clean and your hair combed, and if you have any better clothes than those you can put them on; if not, why come as you are."

Jim looked down at his rags and then looked at Meg.

"Well, marm, we've got some better clothes, and if ma will let us wear them we will. I guess she will, don't you, Meg?"

Meg nodded her head.

"Now good morning, James and Margaret," said the lady, "and be sure you are there in season at nine o'clock."

"Yes marm, good morning, marm," and Jimmy made an attempt at a bow.

No sooner had the lady turned the corner than Jimmy began to give vent to his feelings by turning summersaults. After having amused himself thus till it seemed as if one could not tell whether he was really on his head or his heels, he suddenly stopped and exclaimed,

"Well, Meg, this is a go; did you hear? Going to a picnic, with heaps of other children. Do you suppose Dick Sullivan and Mike Flaherty are going too?"

"Or Katy Burns and Mary Casey," said Meg.

"To-morrow!" said Tim. "Don't I wish it was to-morrow now? Did you hear, Meg? a steamboat!" And over went Jim in another summersault. "And a sail on the water, and a dinner in the woods! think of that, Meg. Oh, isn't it a go? Let's go and see Dick and Mike."

"Yes, and Katy and Mary," said Meg as she jumped up from the ground.

"Won't it be jolly? Don't I wish it was to-morrow?"

And Jimmy disappeared down the street, occasionally relieving himself by turning a summersault, while Meg more demure walked along by his side.

The account of this excursion to which these children went with a host of others, on that bright summer day would be too long for me to tell you now, but no doubt many of you have seen it in the papers.

It was a good thing to give to those children into whose lives comes so little that is pleasant and bright, this one day to be to them always a sunny spot in their memories. And it was not only the pleasure of the excursion, the sail on the water, the dinner in the woods, but it was the thought that they had been remembered by those who being more prosperous than they, were willing to give of their abundance to minister to their pleasure.

N. T. M.

About the Bible.

Many are the testimonies of learned and distinguished men in favor of the Bible. Here are some of them.

The Bible is the best book in the world. It contains more of my little philosophy than all the libraries I have seen.—*President John Adams.*

I have read the Bible morning, noon, and night, and have ever since been the happier and better man for such reading.—*Edmund Burke.*

There is no book like the Bible for excellent learning, wisdom, and use.—*Sir Matthew Hale.*

Books about religion may be useful; but they will not do instead of the simple truth of the Bible.—*Wm. Wilberforbo.*

The Bible is a sream where alike the elephant may swim and the lamb may wade.—*Gregory the Great.*

There are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.—*Milton.*

I have always said, and always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands.—*President Jeffersou.*

Wanted!

A writer in that spicy little monthly paper called *The Missionary Box*, published in New York city, gives a list of "wants," which we would present to the readers of the MYRTLE, old and young:

"WANTED—Ten Thousand Recruits for the Universalist Missionary Army. No Applicant received under two, or over one hundred years of age. Boys and girls connected with the Sunday School are urged to enlist.

WANTED—That every Universalist Pastor, Sunday School Superintendent, and Missionary Box Agent throughout the country should take an interest in this enterprise, and do all in their power to encourage it.

WANTED—One thousand earnest and energetic young men to devote themselves to the work of the Universalist Ministry.

WANTED—That every Universalist family without a Missionary Box should apply for one without delay.

WANTED—To see how that Universalist looks who 'cant afford' to give at least one cent a week to the Missionary cause.''

Value of Sunday Schools.

A poor woman in London applied one Sabbath forenoon for a Bible for her daughter, who had left the school to go to service. On being asked if her children had been benefited by the school, she replied, "Yes; I can never be too thankful that they were ever brought here. When they first came, my husband and myself lived a most wretched life, and never attended any place of worship; but when my two oldest girls had attended but a short time, they said to me one Sunday, 'Mother, you never go either to church or chapel; why do you not?' I knew not what to say and was deeply affected, and thought how sad that I should have to be taught by my children my duty to God, instead of my teaching them. I began to go to a place of worship from that time, and soon after, my husband also. I cannot tell you, sir, what a happy change has been effected in my family. All my children have turned out great blessings. My eldest girls have gone out to service, have obtained good characters, and are doing well. O, sir, when I see the bad conduct of many children, I feel that I ought to bless God for Sunday Schools.

Two Great Mistakes.

There are some who think and say that Christian Universalism is "too good to be true," because it teaches us that God the Father of all men will finally make all his children holy and happy. As though there could be any good too great for the infinite and loving Father to confer upon his children! God is good enough to do *the best* for them all, and he will.

There are some persons, too, who talk just as strangely when they say that the precepts of the New Testament are too perfect to be observed by men; that the example of Jesus is too high to be successfully imitated by mortals. We shall all see the foolishness of these thoughts as we strive to obey the precepts and to follow the example of Jesus. The standard is high, surely; and so much the better for us all. We may keep constantly trying to reach it, and the more constantly we try, the higher up we shall go.

Jesus a Divine Teacher.

Many readers of history, old and young, are deeply interested in the life and character of Napoleon. They regard him as one of the greatest heroes the world has known. But let us hear what he thought of one who was greater than he, and who came to conquer men not with the weapons of material force, but with the "mild arms of peace and love.''

When Napoleon was at St. Helena, a prisoner, he said to General Bertrand, "I know man, and I tell you Christ was not a man. Everything about Christ astonishes me. His spirit overwhelms and confounds me. There is no comparison between him and any other being. He stands single and alone. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemange, and I, have founded empires; but on what rests the creation of our genius? On force. Jesus alone founded his kingdom on love; and at this hour millions of men would die for him."

Excursions for Poor Children.

There have been very pleasant excursions for the benefit of poor and destitute children during the past summer months, quite a number of them in Boston and vicinity. Generous friends have supplied the means for these entertainments, and hundreds of happy ones have had the benefit of them. This is something that looks very much like Christian kindness and love. To supply the destitute and make the forsaken ones happy is one of the virtues ever acceptable to our heavenly Father, and agreeable to the teaching and practice of his holy Son. Heathenism don't do this; it is because of Christianity that we hear of such kind conduct towards the needy ones in human society. We hope that these excursions for the poor will be multiplied another year; indeed, we have no doubt of it.

——In the time of Edward I., A. D. 1220, a copy of the Bible was valued at one hundred and sixty-four dollars of our currency. Now millions of copies are yearly distributed. A good Bible for family use can now be had for forty-five cents; some are sold for twenty-five cents, and Testaments are as cheap as six and a quarter cents.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON CVI.

CHRIST AT THE LAST SUPPER.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

SCRIPTURE. — Math. xxvi. 20. Mark xiv. 17. Luke xxii. 8–18; 24–30.

NOTE. The Feast of the Passover was established to preserve among the Hebrews the memory of their liberation from Egyptian bondage. It continued seven days, and the last day was one of great festivity.

Question. — Who were sent to prepare for Christ and the twelve to keep the Passover?

Answer. — Luke xxii. 8.

Q. — To whom were they to apply for a room to keep the festival in?

A. — Luke xxii. 10, 11.

NOTE. As all Jews, wherever residing, made it a point to keep the Passover in Jerusalem, that city was greatly crowded during the time. And the people of the city gave all the accommodations they could to the great multitude of strangers.

Q. — Did the man provide a room?

A. — Luke xxii. 12.

Q. — What did Peter and John do?

A. — Luke xxii. 13.

NOTE. The articles of food upon the table and the attire in which the Jews come to it, were intended to recall, as far as possible, all the circumstances of the exodus from Egypt. The lamb was wasted whole and the bread was simple flour and water bread baked without being raised by leaven or yeast. These were to put them in mind of the haste with which their fathers were compelled to move—a haste so great that they had no time except to prepare food in the simplest and quickest way. Upon the table, also, was a paste made of raisins, to represent the clay of which their fathers were compelled to make bricks without straw to hold them together. Bitter herbs were placed upon the table and eaten with the food, to put them in mind of the bitterness of their father's bondage. And red wine was used to symbolize the blood placed upon the lintels of the doors on that eventful night when the Egyptian children were destroyed and the Hebrew children preserved alive. When they came to other feasts they removed their outer garments, laid aside their staves, removed their sandals and washed their feet. But when they came to the Passover table, they came with sandals on and with unwashed feet, with outer garments on and closely girded, and with staff in hand. that they might be reminded of the readiness in which their fathers always stood to leave the land of bondage.

Q. — When the season for the feast had come, what did Jesus do?

A. — Luke xxii. 14.

Hidden Seed

Enigma No. 1.

My first, a mount in Palestine,
From which the Lord ascended;
My second moved by hate and fear,
The life of Abel ended.

My third is thought to be the mount
Of the transfiguration;
My fourth some prophets once concealed,
And caused their preservation.

My fifth, a city whose proud king
Was sent "to grass" as stated;
My sixth, a river of the East,
Where it was situated.

My seventh was where Pharaoh's hosts
Were overthrown together;
My whole is with us once again,
With bright and cloudy weather.

Enigma No. 2.

I am composed of 16 letters.
My 16, 8, 11, 12, is a fabulous story.
My 6, 2, 4, is an insect.
My 3, 12, 9, 4 is fictitious.
My 13, 9, 7, is a part of the head.
My 12, 15, 5, is to sing low.
My 10, 9, 1, 13, is to call.
My whole is a plant.

Questions.

What was the name of the first church that John wrote to from Patmos?

What did Jacob pour on his pillars of stone?

What was the tenth Jewish month?

Answers.

SEPT. 28. Patience, Spirit, Anger, Love, Merciful, Sin.

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